WOODRIDGE PARK DISTRICT
Fred C. Hohnke Community Center
Special Board Meeting
December 2, 2025

President Cohen called the Regular Meeting of the Board of Commissioners to order at 5:01 p.m.

Upon a roll of Commissioners being called, the following were
Present: Cohen, Venouziou, Coleman, Perry
Absent: Mahoney

Staff present: Knitter, Ritter, Webber, Bordewick, Karesh, Romano, Blaugh, Knipfer, Widloe Absent: None

ADDITIONS/DELETIONS/CHANGES TO THE AGENDA
President Bill Cohen asked whether there were any staff recommendations or Commissioner requests to add, delete, or revise the agenda for December 2, 2025. Executive Director Knitter responded Yes. Knitter recommended that the meeting adjourn into Executive Session after item D (Budget Workshop) regarding Section 5 ILCS (120/2(c)(1) to discuss the appointment, employment, compensation, discipline, performance, or dismissal of specific employees of the District.

MOTION by Coleman and seconded by Perry to approve the changes to the December 2, 2025, agenda.

AYES: Coleman, Perry, Venouziou, and Cohen
NAYS: None
ABSENT: Mahoney

MOTION CARRIED.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION
None

FY2026 BUDGET WORKSHOP
Executive Director Knitter opened the FY2026 Budget Workshop and outlined the agenda. First, staff will discuss the revenue facilities, then go through the District's Mission Statement, Long-Term Goals, and Core Values, the 2026–2030 Capital Development Program rankings, and, finally, the 2026 Budget with information on 2025 performance. Knitter stated that the Athletic Recreation Center (ARC) will be presented first by Assistant Superintendent of Recreation Rick Knipfer, who will discuss the 2025 year-in-review, the 2026 projected budget, and the proposed 2026 capital replacement plan.

Knipfer started his presentation by noting that the ARC continued to perform very well in 2025, experiencing all-time highs in rental revenue, ARC programming revenue, and fitness revenue. Overall, the total number of rental permits issued in 2025 was 22 fewer than in the same period in 2024. Despite a reduction in the total amount of rental permits issued, overall rental revenue increased by $85,789 compared to the same time period in 2024. ARC Program Revenue continued the upward trend from the past few years, rising by $117,985 in 2025 compared to 2024. Overall, Total Fitness Membership averages have increased in 2025. Individual (+48), Senior/Military (+55), Silver Sneakers (+82), Renew Active (+20), 1-month (+5), 90-day (+21), and Annual Track (+23) memberships were all increased in 2025. Daily Fitness Pass Sales, Daily Track, and Individual Group X Sales all increased in 2025 (+207 Daily Fitness, +236 Daily Track, +15 Individual Group X). The Membership Fitness Scans (visits to the fitness floor) hit an all-time high of 154,462. This was an increase of 18,385 visits compared to 2024, the previous high. ARC Fitness Revenue increased $33,737 in 2025 compared to 2024. The most significant increases were in Fitness Memberships, Health Insurance Memberships, and Personal Training.

Knipfer added that the ARC completed both scheduled and unexpected repairs in 2025. The report lists those repairs and projects completed in 2025. Additionally, the ARC continued to increase Adult Open Pickleball offerings for ARC Fitness Members in 2025. At times throughout the year, Adult Open Pickleball is offered up to 5 days a week. The ARC will continue to host the District's Cabin Fever event on February 22, 2026, after another successful year 2025 of the event at the

ARC. The ARC also hosted some new rental events in 2025, including Shotokan Belt Testing at all gyms, the Illinois Ultimate Frisbee MS Event (again using all gyms), and the CASO Cricket League on Friday and Saturday evenings on the turf from December to February. These rentals took place during down periods when historically nothing was scheduled at those times. Knipfer then focused on the 2026 Outlook/Highlights, noting continued growth in rental revenue. The ARC will replace aging equipment out of the CRP Fund in 2026. The equipment to be replaced consists of 5 treadmills, 3 AEDs, and 2 Water Heaters. In addition to the CRP purchases, the ARC is budgeted to complete the following projects in 2026: high-dusting and deep cleaning of the ARC ($40,000), refinishing the floors in Gym 1, 2, and MAC Gym ($5,250), and ARC Light Repairs ($20,000). 2026 will be the ARCs' 10th year in operation. As the facility ages, a proposed deep cleaning is recommended to maintain its cleanliness and presentability to patrons. A combination of Park District staff and contracted vendors would complete the cleaning over the course of a week, while the facility would remain inaccessible to the public. Staff recommends this be done in August, following the Camp season and before Kidz Squad is offered. This timing would also be the least impactful for fitness members, as check-ins are lower during that time of year.

As the ARC marks its 10th anniversary, lights throughout the facility are beginning to age and go out. These fixtures are no longer under any warranty. In talking with multiple electricians, staff are finding that for many fixtures within the facility, the entire fixture will need to be replaced, rather than a bulb or ballast replacement. The whole fixture replacement is both cheaper and, for some fixtures, necessary because the current fixture is obsolete and repair parts are unavailable. Light replacement will be an expense the ARC will need to continue to budget for and address in 2026 and beyond.

Commissioner Perry asked whether there are any savings similar to those from the light fixture changes at the Community Center. Knipfer responded that the current lights are all LED, so there will be no savings.

Knipfer finished by detailing planned fee changes for 2026. The ARC's rental fees are set through June 30, 2026, via the fee ordinance passed in January 2025. The ARC's rental fees are set on a July-June timeline to better coincide with the school year, which ARC programming and ARC rental groups/organizations also line up with. For the July 1, 2026-June 30, 2027 ARC rental fees, we are proposing a 5% increase in the gym rental fees and a 3% increase in the turf rental fees. These increases would help cover the always-increasing costs of utilities and repairs to the ARC as it continues to age. There is no increase in the proposed program room rental fees. We have increased these rates each of the last three years, and the current pricing is more in line with other facilities with similar rental space. Additionally, there is no proposed increase in the batting cage rental fees. Both ARC Birthday Parties and Open Gym and Turf fees have increased over the past few years and are in line with similar offerings. No increase is proposed for the ARC Birthday Party, Open Gym, and Turf pricing.

Commissioner Perry asked what partner programs, such as Woodridge baseball or the soccer program, pay rate-wise when they rent the ARC? Knipfer remarked that affiliates pay the resident rate.

Aquatics Facility Manager, Amanda Widloe, next presented Cypress Cove Family Aquatic Park. This year, the facility is projecting a negative fund balance of $123,851. That is due to a large number of costly capital replacement projects this year. The facility incurred approximately $390,000 in capital replacement projects this year. The operating season for the facility in 2025 was June 1st through August 17th, and the post-season began on August 14th through Labor Day.

The facility maintained its reputation for strong Lifeguard evaluation scores, culminating in a five-star Audit. This year, the facility went from 40 to 70 lifeguards, so training and getting them really well-oiled took a little longer than usual. Still, we finally finished with a five-star Audit from the certification company. Concession statistics are holding at about a 24% profit margin. Food costs have been going through the roof, and some items are commodities, so it's hard to price them out when they fluctuate on the fly. Attendance was down about 1%, but revenue increased 3.7%, as expected given the increased rates imposed for the 2025 season. For group outings, continue the trend of about 10.5% growth, with overall revenue rising 9.4% in 2024. While Season Passes decreased by 6.8%, its overall revenue increased 4.2%.

Widloe reiterated that the facility had numerous costly capital-replacement projects. We had an unexpected pool leak in the zero-depth. We had the Lazy River liner removed, the Lazy River sandblasted, and repainted. That alone was... almost $250,000. We had to replace the heater in the lazy river, then the central bathhouse air conditioning units. For next year, we only have about $96,000 in capital replacement projects under consideration, so we're very excited to see that decrease.

Widloe noted that the 2026 Budget presents a 14.5% decrease in expenditures, again due to those capital replacement projects. And then the projected revenue is also budgeted to decrease about 19.7%, because last year we had a $230,000 transfer from the Corporate Fund to help offset capital costs. Commissioner Venouziou asked if the facility does not expect to have to borrow from the Corporate Fund in 2026? Widloe responded that we do not. We hope to be balanced this coming year.

Widloe continued by discussing season pass fees. She noted that the recommendation is to increase those slightly. The increase is based on taking last year's pre-season rate and making it the following year's early-bird rate, so we can still offer the opportunity for pass holders to get a season pass at last year's pricing, in this early rate. So patrons still have the opportunity to start at last year's season prices, then the pre-season rate increases, and the regular rate increases as well. For outings, we are proposing to increase admission by about 50% per person, splash parties $25 per party, and rental fees $100 per rental. No increases to daily admissions are being recommended at this time.

President Cohen remarked that both reports were well done and thanked the staff for their presentations.

Knitter briefly discussed the District's current Mission Statement and the proposed changes to be approved at an upcoming meeting. She then stated that there are no recommended changes to the District's current long-term goals or core values.

Knitter moved on to discuss the 2026 – 2030 Capital Development Program (CDP). The first slide presented detailed "must-do" projects that were not included in the Board and Staff's ranking exercise. Those projects total $177,000, leaving approximately $1,000,000 in CDP funding available in 2026.

President Cohen asked if this was in the ranking exercise. Knitter commented that these projects are not, as they should be completed. Cohen asked about the chip pile, to which Superintendent of Parks Karesh responded that it consists of many large logs and trees that need to be cleared, and that the area will then be restored to a more natural state. Knitter then went on to describe the projects that add up to the $177,000 – the Hawthorne Hill Woods chip pile removal/restoration, Hawthorne Hill Woods monitoring and maintenance, Customer Service safety enhancements, Mending Wall drinking fountain, ARC ropes course removal, and the addition of a curtain divider, and lightning protection systems at Orchard Hill Park and Janes Avenue Park.

Knitter moved on to discuss the CDP ranking exercise the Board and Staff conducted, which ranked the top 30 projects from a list of 65 to be focused on from 2026 to 2030. Knitter tabulated the results in four ways: weighted average, Board-only results, Staff-only results, and total results (no weighting). Knitter explained that the best methodology is the weighted average, with 50% weighted to the Board and 50% to Staff. The weighted average led to the following projects being the top choices: Hawthorne Hill Woods Trail development was one, Jubilee Point Park phase three development was next, Jubilee Point Park challenge course, the Orchard Hill Walking Jogging Trail, the Orchard Hill Soccer Fields, and then Jubilee Point Park North Path, and then Castaldo Park Development. The District has anticipated total funding of $5,000,000 from 2026-2030, which this grouping falls under. Knitter remarked that this would be the recommendation for the next 5 years. Knitter went on to state that, given all the work being done at Jubilee Point Park, she believes it is best to wait on those projects and focus on other areas of Woodridge.

Commissioner Venouziou asked to verify that the top 7 projects listed in the weighted-average category are the recommended ones. Kntiter said yes and that the project that makes the most sense in 2026 is the Jubilee Point Park Challenge Course, as the School District has stated they would like to cost-share on the project. Venouziou asked whether the $375,000 was the entire project or just the District's share. Knitter responded that the total cost is $375,000, with the District responsible for half. Knitter then stated that completing the two Orchard Hill Park projects, which are in the Masterplan, would be a nice addition to that area and is recommending completing those two, as well.

Commissioner Perry asked how accurate these figures are. If we wait, will the $2.8 million project be $3.2 or $3.5 million in 2030? Knitter stated that the projects were investigated by the Superintendent of Planning Bordewick, but are best estimates at this time. Superintendent of Finance Webber commented that if the Board chose to focus on the large Jubilee Point Park project, funding would not be available until at least 2028, so other projects would have to be put on hold.

Venouziou asked if the staff were comfortable with $1,000,000 a year for CDP. Webber stated yes and mentioned that the one-year Capital Replacement was by-passed, so if more funding was needed, there are other avenues available. Knitter commented staff would need to assess capital in the replacement program before a decision like that is made just to ensure the current equipment is in good shape.

Commissioner Coleman said he would really like to see the $100,000 Castaldo Park project completed in this five year projection, as well. Knitter stated that the plan could be to complete the four projects and, if the School District agrees to share funding for the challenge course, possibly add another project down the line.

Knitter asked the Board for consensus on this approach so that staff can include it in the Budget and Appropriations Ordinance at the next meeting. The Board concurred with Venouziou, commenting on the $2.8 million Jubilee Point Park project and noting that if that were deferred, the District could complete the following 10 projects or so in the next 5 years. Knitter commented that this approach would allow the District to spread projects out across the District properties, as well. The Jubilee Point Park project could then be at the front of the next five-year period, beginning in 2031. Knitter went on to explain that when the Bonds come off the books in 2034, the District will have ample funding for larger projects.

Commissioner Perry remarked that many of the people he talks to feel that an amphitheater at Jubilee Point Park would not be a good idea. Perry went on to comment that, with the funds not currently available to fund that project, delaying it and focusing on it when the Bonds come off the books is his opinion. Webber stated that after 2033, $3 million would be available for CDP annually. Knitter then commented that delaying would also allow them to look at OSLAD grants in the future to help fund the project. Knitter then stated the Board could still fund the north loop path at Jubilee Point Park in the meantime, which was highly ranked by the public and the board/staff.

Knitter asked if the Board was comfortable with the current four projects for 2026 (Jubilee Point Park Challenge Course, Orchard Hill Park walking and Jogging Trail, Orchard Hill Park Soccer Fields #1 and #2 Lighting, and Castaldo Park Improved Picnic Area) to which they commented yes. Knitter went on to explain that she will prepare several capital scenarios for the Board to consider for the remaining 4 years of the Strategic Master Plan, to be finalized in the 1st or 2nd quarter of 2026.

Knitter stated that the presentation will now focus on the 2026 Budget and commented on the impressive design of the professional reports completed by Colleen Kane, the District's Graphic Designer. Knitter then deferred to Webber. Webber stated that all the Budget documents were available on Google Drive for the Board's review and that he could be contacted with any questions.

Webber stated that the 2026 budget being proposed, the total budget being presented to the board this evening, is $20,061,698. The annual budget is the foundation for the district's financial planning and control, so it's one of staff's most important tasks. There's a long list of elements to guide the development of this budget. The tax levy extensions is a large portion of the budget. CPI remains at 3% as of September. The community survey, as well as all the exercises the board and staff did, planned capital project investments and purchases, investment in staff, a proposed 5% pay increase in the budget, investment in new technology innovations, restructuring of the organizational chart, increases in fees that were mentioned earlier, and then probably the biggest component affecting this budget is the termination of the Village Greens lease, a $2 million budget that's no longer included. Of the total proposed $20 million dollar budget, $8.8 of that is the general fund, which consists of corporate, capital replacement, and capital development. $4.8 million is the Recreation fund, and $1.7 million is the aquatics fund. Debt service is $3.2 million, and other governmental funds total $1.5 million.

Knitter next discussed the proposed Organization Chart changes and will seek final approval at the December Regular Board Meeting. Knitter noted the changes that will occur in any affected Department, as well as modifications based on likely retirements during 2026 and the current plans in place. Knitter then deferred back to Webber, who went on to discuss the District's Equalized Assessed Valuation (EAV) and Tax Levy. The estimated EAV is expected to increase by 2.8% in 2025, allowing the overall tax rate to decrease or remain relatively flat. Two main factors drive EAV: inflationary growth, which is projected to be 2.551% in 2025, and then new growth, which is projected to be 5.1 million. 5.1 million is the lowest the District has seen in a while, but there's not much significant development currently occurring in Woodridge, so that is expected to slow down.

Webber next discussed the Salary and Wage Scale and how salary ranges are computed as well as how often. The range will be approved at the December Regular Board Meeting. The next topic focused on the overall budget comparing the 2024 results, 2025 results and the proposed 2026 overall budget. Webber noted the decrease in the 2026 budget being due to the lease termination of Village Greens, which was approximately $2 million of the prior year budget, and the decrease in CDP planned due to Jubilee Point Park expected completion in 2026.

Webber next discussed fund-level budgets. He mentioned the budget book is categorized as Major Governmental Funds and then Non-Major funds – exactly how the Audit is presented. The General Fund comprises Corporate, CRP, and CDP. The Corporate Fund is the District's primary operating Fund and accounts for all the general government resources except those accounted for in another Fund. The Corporate Fund is estimated to have revenues that exceed expenses by $129,000 after transfers in 2025. Then, any net positive changes will add to the Fund Balance in the Corporate Fund.

The 2026 budget is proposed to increasing by $104,000, or 2.76%, not a significant increase. Revenues are expected to increase by 2.5% in 2026, driven by property taxes. The other revenue categories have minor changes and are based on history and recent performance. On the expense side, many factors are driving the budget, including the budgeted 5% pay increases for staff, an increase in benefits and insurance by $26,000, and that's just due to staff adjusting choices. Additionally, the District now pays the Village's debt service out of this Fund, so that's $675,000 of the Corporate Fund Budget, which is a significant amount. Also included are the changes reflected in the 2026 Organizational Chart with the addition of the Facility Maintenance Department in the Corporate Fund.

The next fund discussed was the Capital Replacement Fund (CRP). The District takes an aggressive approach in replacing current equipment, infrastructure, and building-related items. The primary funding sources for CRP are property tax transfers from the Corporate Fund, gains from the sale of current assets, reimbursements from partners who share in the cost of replacement, and investment income. The year 2025 was a productive one with many projects completed, as Bordewick has highlighted throughout the year in his reports. For 2026, the planned budget is $2,614,706, including $961,000 for new capital replacement projects. Some notable projects in the budget include a new backup and immutable server for $23,000; four Vehicle replacements totaling about $135,000 (includes two dump trucks, a club car, and a club car/utility vehicle); maintenance equipment of $35,000; Falconridge Park play equipment purchase and safety service of $75,000; Orchard Hill Park parking lot resurfacing $113,000; 63rd Street Park play equipment purchase of $128,000; Westminster Park Play Equipment and Safety Service: $195,000; Goodrich and Meadowview Schools will have new backstops and fabric replaced for $84,000. There are many other less significant items budgeted in this Fund that can be found in the detail of this fund, as well.

The Recreation Fund accounts for revenue from property tax levies, facility rentals, investment income, program fees, and special event revenues. The 2025 performance of the Recreation Fund was strong, with an estimated year-end surplus of $125,000. The 2026 Recreation budget is actually a slight decrease from the 2025 budget. The 2026 budget revenues are a slight increase from the 2025 budget and estimated revenues. On the expense side, the budgets are only going to increase by 1.82%.

The final Major Fund is the Debt Service Fund, which accounts for the principal and interest payments of the District's General Obligation Bonds or Debt Certificates. Funding comes from property taxes, annual rollover bonds, and investment income. In the 2026 budget, the only difference is that the District paid off the 2015 C debt certificates just two weeks ago, so one of the debts came off the books. However, when the District refinanced in 2020 and 2021, the bond payments were structured so that annual payments did not fluctuate over the term of the debt.

Webber next moved on to Nonmajor Funds, which are special-purpose District activities that are accounted for via a tax levy, and some are not. The funds are for particular purposes. The Liability Insurance Fund is a special revenue Fund that provides property tax Funding for expenses related to tort liability, insurance, and risk management programs. The Park District Risk Management Agency, or PDRMA, provides liability insurance to the District through its risk pool, which gives the District greater purchasing power to keep rates lower. The District allocates expenses to this Fund as well as to the revenue facilities, since they are not taxpayer-funded and therefore pay for their share of property and casualty insurance.

Next Fund, the Audit Fund covers our Audit and any associated expenses on an annual basis. For 2026, there is an increase in the fee, but that's due to possibly having to complete grant-specific Audits.

The IMRF/FICA Fund accounts for the District's IMRF expenses as well as the FICA expenses for employees not tied to a revenue facility. The IMRF rate is increasing from 6.96% to 9.02%, which is a 30% increase. This led to a significant increase in the budget: $221,000 in IMRF expenses in 2026, compared to $162,000 in 2025. The rate increase was due to the retirement rate.

The Working Cas Fund was initially established through $100,000 property tax levy. Any interest that we earn in this Fund can be transferred to the Corporate Fund and used as the District sees fit. The Fund is a rainy-day Fund that can be used only as a temporary loan to the District for specific purposes. Basically, if the District had to pay salaries or other necessary expenses. If the District had used these funds, repayment would have to be made in the next tax cycle.

The SEASPAR Fund was established to collect taxes to help fund SEASPAR programming for patrons with special needs. The 2026 budget is a 5.65% decrease overall. The contribution portion has increased, but the capital-related portion has decreased slightly as the District has completed several projects this year.

The Restricted Contributions Fund is a Fund dedicated to reporting developer contributions. The District transferred $100,000 from that amount this year to the Capital Development Fund for Jubilee Point Park. Remaining funds can be used at any time as needed for park development throughout the District.

Webber moved on to the final fund, the Jubilee Fund, which tracks the revenues and expenses of the annual Jubilee. The 2025 event was the largest in District history in terms of revenues and costs, and we're expecting 2026 to be similar.

Webber concluded the budget presentation for the evening and reiterated that the budget detail and all budget-related documents are available online for the Board's review.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

At 6:32 p.m., MOTION by Perry and seconded by Coleman to adjourn to Executive Session under:

Section 5 ILCS 120/2(c)(1) to discuss the appointment, employment, compensation, discipline, performance, or dismissal of specific employees of the District.

President Cohen requested a roll call. Upon a roll being called:

AYES:	Perry, Coleman, Venouziou, and Cohen
NAYS:	None
ABSENT:	Mahoney

MOTION CARRIED

RECONVENE OPEN SESSION

The December 2, 2025, Special Board Meeting reconvened at 6:59 p.m. Upon a roll call of Commissioners, the following were Present: Cohen, Coleman, Venouziou. Staff: Knitter, Ritter, Webber

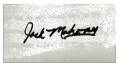
ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Board, a motion to adjourn was requested. MOTION by Coleman, seconded by Venouziou, to adjourn the special board meeting at 6:59 p.m. President Cohen requested a voice vote to adjourn the special board meeting of December 2, 2025.

Upon a roll of Commissioners being called, the following were
Present: Venouziou, Coleman, and Cohen
Absent: Mahoney and Perry

ALL AYES. MOTION CARRIED.

Respectfully submitted.



Jack Mahoney, Secretary